



# Watchung Hills Regional High School District

## Newsletter

### From the desk of the Superintendent

December 2017



Last year, we had focused conversations around social and emotional wellness in order to actualize one of our Strategic Plan Goals: *Create and expand programs and services that enhance the social and emotional wellness of all students within a compassionate learning community.* Each of us plays a key role in promoting this goal every day through our care for our students in a multitude of ways. Many members of our professional learning community also assumed leadership roles last year in planning more formal ways to address wellness on a district level through our first homework free breaks, development of the [Healthy Edge](#) web resource, and shadowing a student for a day (just to name a few).

The WHRHS BOE is committed to continuing and expanding these efforts during the coming year, recognizing the importance of nourishing both the minds and bodies of our students and staff. We kicked off the year with Linda Lantieri as our keynote speaker for our faculty convocation. Ms. Lantieri is co-founder and Senior Program Advisor for the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL). Her presentation to our staff addressed how adults and high school students can actively cultivate the

pro-social and cognitive qualities that nurture social and emotional learning for oneself and others. Ms. Lantieri discussed self-care strategies and teaching strategies that focus on improving attention, balancing emotions, and building positive relationships. She will also focus on practices that build inner strength and greater resiliency in both adults and students.

The goal of this initial session was to provide a foundation of knowledge and skills to utilize and build upon throughout the year. Toward that end, our two full days of Professional Development for our staff that followed on October 10th & 11th featured a national trainer for the International Institute on Restorative Practices whose session centered upon building and maintaining relationships to improve learning as well as sessions led by our own staff members that included such topics as connecting literature to mindfulness, supporting students with anxiety and depression, and cultivating a growth mindset. On December 11th, we are hosting a district-wide Wellness Day for our staff and students. In addition to over 100 of our students participating in our annual Challenge Day - an empathy and community-building experience - on the 11th, the remainder of our student body will engage in lessons in their courses related to various wellness practices and topics. The day's events also include a Health and Wellness Fair to provide resources to our staff to assist them in maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

***"Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all."***

***Aristotle***

As Aristotle so eloquently stated, "Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all." While our students continue to soar to new heights of achievement at Watchung Hills, it is crucial that we educate their hearts and their spirits in addition to their minds. We will continue to work collaboratively with all members of our learning community to make progress toward this goal and the other goals set forth in the Strategic Plan, helping each Watchung Hills student achieve his or her full potential. I look forward to continuing our work together to make Watchung Hills even better tomorrow than we are today!

Regards,

Superintendent

## Opening Day Staff Convocation

Superintendent Elizabeth Jewett, Principal George Alexis and Director of Human Resources Beth Scheiderman welcomed teachers back on Tuesday, Sept. 5, to the 2017-2018 School Year Opening Day at Watchung Hills Regional High School. Following opening remarks at a Staff Convocation, the teachers were treated to a Luncheon BBQ in the south cafeteria, with burgers and hot dogs barbecued by members of the WHRHS Football Team and Touchdown Club. The teachers also attended two days of departmental meetings and breakout sessions on Sept. 5, and Wednesday, Sept. 6.

"It is truly a pleasure to be standing here in front of all of you this morning and it is my privilege to welcome you back for the 2017-2018 school year," Jewett said in addressing the school's teachers to start the speaking program at the Staff Convocation. "I truly enjoy getting to share with you all the progress we made over the summer as well as celebrate all of our district accomplishments and the role that you have played."

Highlights from the summer of preparation for this school year, Jewett said, included the kitchen expansion and modernization in the south cafeteria. This construction project was the last major project funded through the 2013 referendum. Those voter-approved improvements have covered over the last several summers multiple other physical facility improvements to the WHRHS physical plant, ranging from refurbished parking lots to kitchen and bathroom upgrades and modernizations.

Other summer improvements this summer included the replacement of a large walk-in refrigerator in the north kitchen, replacement of the aging water boiler in the south building, replacement of ductwork in ceramics and photography rooms, remediation of sinks and fountains that had failed lead testing requirements with new fixtures and filters, and continued exterior work on the Mountain Avenue athletic field.

Jewett also listed the broad and numerous upgrades added over the summer in technology, including a Web site upgrade, a new 1:1 Chromebook Initiative which has provided more than

500 Chromebooks to the incoming Ninth Grade students, new teacher laptops, 11 new SMART Boards, server upgrades and more.

She also listed the numerous awards, championships, academic honors and community based accolades earned last



year by students, as well as distinctions, and ongoing academic and professional improvements, pursued by faculty and staff over the summer and throughout the school year.

Among the academic achievements that stand out were the ongoing excellence by WHRHS students in Advanced Placement testing and National Merit achievement, Jewett said. Average AP Exam score last year for 1,169 test taken was 4.19 out of 5. Out of 68 recognized students in the class of 2018, 15 have been named National Merit Semifinalists, the most ever at Watchung Hills. The district continues to implement the goals set out in the Board of Education adopted Strategic Plan 2015-2020. Jewett said she is excited to start the 2017-2018 School Year. She also announced that WHRHS has been awarded a Bronze Certificate – and an accompanying \$2,000 grant, which has been used to purchase new color-coded recycling bins – by the Sustainable Jersey for Schools program. "I look forward to an amazing year with all of you," Jewett told the staff. "Watchung Hills is truly a world-class learning community."

In welcoming everyone back for a new school year, Alexis shared what he discovered at a summer learning opportunity he participated in, attended by 137 other principals.

"I met folks from as close as Paramus, Rockland County, and Massachusetts, from across the United States -- Florida, Texas, Silicon Valley, and even the Big Island of Hawaii -- and from as far away as New Zealand and Australia," Alexis said. "We realized very quickly that we all were wrestling with the same challenges and that we all were committed to providing authentic-learning opportunities for kids."

He said he heard his teachers talking about how we all have an innate curiosity and desire to learn and explore. "We also have a natural desire to grow, improve, and strive toward mastery," Alexis said, "and much of our own adult learning comes from the same culture of inquiry and collaboration that is helping our kids discover the relevance of their academic skills."

"It makes good sense that we remain focused on our vision of preparing our students for a global community that requires a commitment to critical reasoning, creativity and collaboration," he said.

"Our focus on wellness and emotional intelligence will help our students realize their purpose and potential in a complex world," Alexis said. "By creating opportunities for them to learn and grow through choice, reflection, and resilience, we help them realize that they are part of something much larger than themselves."

Human Resources Director Scheiderman introduced new staff at the opening convocation. They are: In the English Department, teachers Michelle Germinario, Sarah Sheridan, Michael Stultz, and Alicia Michalitsianos; in Math, Matthew Crawford; in Special Services, Danielle Esteves, Cynthia Sacco, and Douglas Graiver; in Guidance, Lauren Sagat and Patti Lampa; in Buildings and Grounds, Jennifer Zervopolous; in



## Opening Day Staff Convocation (Cont'd)

Transportation, Jannette Vega; and three student interns, Caelynn Robinson in Social Studies, Simone Waters in social work, and DeAnna LaSasso with the school psychology staff. Also welcomed back after leaves of absence are: Nancy Suppin, Kyla Garcia, and Heather Guirguis. Teachers recognized at the Staff

Convocation for 25, 30 and 35 years of service at WHRHS were: 25 years, Bonnie Burgdorf, Laura Goodson, Courtney Griffith, Michele Lettington, and Daniel Root; 30 years, James Carden, Lydia Chu, and Thomas Loeffler; and 35 years, Laurie Shoemaker.

## Staff Appreciation BBQ

Following the Staff Convocation, the staff at WHRHS were treated to a Luncheon BBQ in the south cafeteria.

Numerous volunteers, staff, parents and students pitched in to help make the luncheon BBQ a festive return to the school year.

Among those volunteering and contributing were members of the Football Team, under the direction of Head Football Coach Rich Seubert, members of the parent Touchdown Club, and numerous businesses in the community.

Providing festive background music for the event was guest guitarist and singer Nicholas Stevens, who is also the president of the Long Hill Township Board of Education. He was joined

for some of his numbers by Watchung Hills Regional High School Board of Education member and singer Chris Collins of Long Hill Township. At other times, he was joined by WHRHS English Teacher Mike Porter, a guitarist and singer. The three also combined to perform and sing as a trio during the performance.

Local businesses who contributed to the event were: Pomptonian Food Service, Fairfield; Costco, North Plainfield; in Warren Township, Kings, Acme, Dunkin Donuts, Ciro's Pizza and Deli, and the Country Squire Restaurant; in Stirling, ShopRite and Blimpie; in Gillette, Starbucks and Primavera Regency; in Watchung, ShopRite and Dunkin Donuts; in Scotch Plains, Grillestone; and Stop and Shop, Corporate.





## WHRHS Achieves Sustainability Certification

Watchung Hills Regional High School has met the rigorous requirements to achieve Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification. This school joins a group of 91 schools that achieved the Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification in 2017. A total of 679 schools and 273 school districts are participating in the program overall.

The Watchung Hills Regional High School District has earned its Bronze level certification with the help of its Green Team members who include the following: Elizabeth Jewett, Superintendent, Timothy Stys, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, Beth Scheiderman, Director of Human Resources and Professional Development, Kris Byk, Acting Director of Operations, Daniel Bertelli, Supervisor of Arts, Physical Education/Health, and Co-curricular Activities, Kathy Haines, Teacher of Science and Environmental Club Advisor, Angelo Foschini, Food Service Director, Angela Valerio, School Nurse, Nicholas DiNizio, Assistant Production Manager, Dina Ballaro, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, Jennifer Zervopoulos,

Secretary for Buildings & Grounds.

"The Sustainable NJ for Schools certification process has called for representatives from all aspects of school operation - facilities, food service, health,

abundant for future generations to enjoy as we have." – Elizabeth C. Jewett, Superintendent, Watchung Hills Regional High School District.

"As students and teachers head back to school this year, they will learn the good news that their hard work has paid off," said Randall Solomon, executive director of Sustainable Jersey. "Becoming certified with Sustainable Jersey for Schools is a significant achievement for schools and their school district. The number of schools participating in the program is truly remarkable."



School Officials from Watchung Hills Regional High School were presented with an engraved plaque commemorating the fact that the school was awarded Bronze-Level certification during the 2017 Sustainable Jersey School Awards Ceremony, held at the New Jersey School Boards Association, Oct. 24, in Atlantic City.

curriculum and instruction, finance - to collaborate to ensure that we are doing our part as a district to promote and model sustainable practices. As educators, it is not only our responsibility to prepare our students to succeed in a changing world, but also to help ensure the world's resources are still

## Keynote Speaker Linda Lantieri

School Year Opening Day Keynote Speaker Linda Lantieri, co-founder and Senior Program Advisor for Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL), urged teachers at WHRHS to not only teach with a more fundamental awareness of the social and emotional influences on students' readiness to learn, but also to blend practices into their classroom routines that create environments more likely to stimulate student readiness to learn.

Lantieri addressed the faculty and administrators on Tuesday, Sept. 5, as WHRHS kicked off its 2017-2018 school year with two days of teacher preparation.

Guest speaker Lantieri started her talk by saying how delighted she was to have arrived at WHRHS early enough to hear some of the opening remarks by Superintendent Elizabeth Jewett, Principal George Alexis and Director of Human Resources and Professional Development Beth Scheiderman, and to

attend the year-opening staff luncheon BBQ just prior to giving her remarks.



The WHRHS team of administrators, teachers and staff impressed her as a spirited and energetic group, who are eager to start the new school year, she said. The staff appeared to her to have high expectations and positive attitudes about giving students opportunities to learn and succeed, as well as a real sense of being on a team. All that is essential

for learning to take place, she said.

Throughout her talk, Lantieri referenced numerous leading-edge works about SEL. She highlighted in particular the 1995 New York Times best seller "Emotional Intelligence," by Daniel Goleman. Emotional Intelligence is about the growing understanding of the importance of emotions in student receptivity to hear and readiness to learn. She also shared concepts about the greater understanding of how stress can hinder learning and receptivity. This is a subject also discussed in the 2000 work, "Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal and Delight in our Busy Lives," by Wayne Muller, she said.

All these concepts are particularly pertinent in the education of high school students, where access to their ability to focus, to really hear, to memorize and to really grasp and integrate concepts, can be hijacked, or conversely heightened, depending upon the student's relative



## Keynote Speaker Linda Lantieri (Cont'd)

SEL condition at any particular time, Lantieri said.

Students, indeed everyone including teachers, can and must train their brains to focus, Lantieri said. This is particularly challenging these days, given the fact that the average student is theorized to routinely have as many as 30,000 thoughts in a day.

Other teachers have found that one practical strategy that works, according to Lantieri, has been to create optimum conditions for student learning by adopting three relatively simple practices to each class period: Have a "Welcoming Ritual," with activities for inclusion; employ "Engaging Practices," including academic integration sense-making,

transitions and "brain breaks;" and have an "Optimistic Closing," including a time for reflections and for looking forward."

"Ms. Lantieri's presentation addressed how teachers and students can actively cultivate self-care strategies and teaching strategies that focus on improving attention, balancing emotions and building positive relationships," Superintendent Jewett said. "She focused on practices that build inner strength and greater resiliency in both adults and students. The goal of this initial session was to provide a foundation of knowledge and skills we can utilize and build upon throughout the year. We are grateful she was able to spend so much time with WHRHS staff as we embark on the 2017-2018 school year."

## 2018 National Merit Semifinalists

A record 15 Watchung Hills Regional High School students in the Class of 2018 have been named Semifinalists in the 2018 National Merit Scholarship Program.

Another 53 WHRHS students have qualified for the honor, "Commended," the category just before Semifinalists. These designations were made based on the scores of students who took the 2016 Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT)/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMQST).

The total of 68 recognized students – combining Semifinalists and Commended students—ranks WHRHS 9th among all high schools in New Jersey, as well as 6th among comprehensive public high schools in the state, and 1st among all high schools in Somerset County, according to Principal George Alexis.

"The National Merit results are impressive and provide further evidence that our sustained focus on inquiry and collaboration is advancing learning in our school," Alexis said. "We are proud of our students and grateful for our teachers' hard work and commitment. The quality of teaching and learning taking place each day is making a difference for our entire school community."

This year's 15 WHRHS National Merit Semifinalists means that as many as 42 WHRHS students have qualified as National Merit Semifinalists during the most recent four years, including 10 in the Class of 2017, six in the Class of 2016, and 11 in the Class of 2015.

The Class of 2018 National Merit Semifinalists are: Kevin Huang, Calvin Li, Rachel Lu, Emma Marszalek, Carl Peterson, Michael Raman, Lindsey Shi, Jeffrey Stickler, Kevin Tan, Craig Vergilio, Olivia Xu, Helen Yang, Linda Ye, Carrie Zhang, and Cherlin Zhu.



The Class of 2018 Commended students are: Keerthi Adusumilli, Michael Brady, Carson Brooks, Jason Chan, Demetra Chang, Rebecca Chang, Shane Checko, Sean P. Coleman, Vincent Dai, Vamsi Desu, Karen Dong, Michelle Du, Michael Duncan, Michael Erickson, Lindsay Fogel, Ian Glass, Nina Goliyad, Aaron Hao, Sierra Heuvelman, Kartik Hoover, Michael Hopwood, Jack Horan, Ashil Jhaveri, Michael Jiang, Brittany Keller, James Keller, James M. Kennelly IV, Nila Kirupaharan, Darren Lei, Alanna Margulies, Ethan Marmolejos, Katherine Morris, William Narayanan, Arthur Paganini, Brady Pilsbury, Daniel Pilsbury, Jared Pincus, Andrew Pluta, Sana Salam, Jarett Schwartz, Deeba Shokrani, Connie Situ, Michael L. Stein, Sophia Su, Sanjay Subramanian, Annika Surapaneni, Michael Tobin, Jennifer Walpow, Ella Walsh, Peter Wu, Michelle Yang, Jason Ye, Zachary Young, and Christopher Yu.

## National Honor Society Induction

Some 121 members of the Class of 2018 at Watchung Hills Regional High School were inducted into the National Honor Society (NHS) during an induction ceremony, Thursday, Oct. 26, at the school.

Parents, families and guests witnessed the ceremony in the school's Performing Arts Center. Superintendent Elizabeth Jewett welcomed all students, parents, teachers and guests who were in attendance, and congratulated the students. Principal George Alexis also congratulated all the students on the high achievement of being inducted into the National Honor Society.

The inductees also selected their "Teacher of the Year," WHRHS History Teacher Ryan Murray. Three of his students, fellow NHS inductees Vamsi Desu, Calvin Le and Kevin Tan, introduced Murray, speaking highly of him as a teacher. They noted his endless enthusiasm in encouraging them to share in his having a thirst for learning.

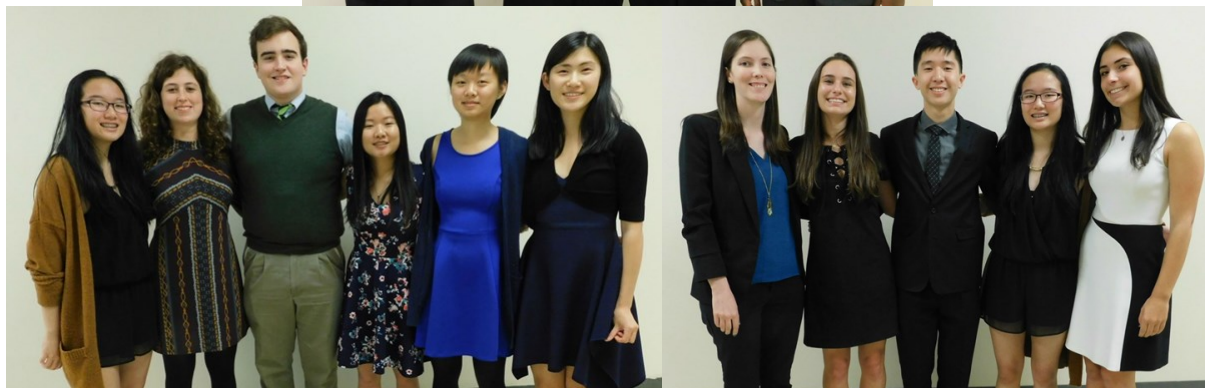
The 2017-18 Class of NHS inductees at WHRHS are: Keerthi Adusumilli, Reid Baltuch, Kathryn Berger, Spencer Bokach, Peter Bosco, Michael Brady, Carson Brooks, Isabella Burt, Alison Cabrera, Shaun Cagnetta, Matthew Canary, David Cantone, Demetra Chang, Rebecca Chang, Shane Checko, Abigail Chutnik, Sean Coleman, Julia Cunningham, Vincent Dai, Gavin DeFuria, Anthony DeNave, Michael Deo, Vamsi Desu, Michelle Du, Michael Erickson, Lindsay Fogel, Julia Fullowan, Andrew Giniger, Ian Glass, Julia Glickman, Nina Goliyad, Justin Halper, Nathanael Hanna, Aaron Hao, Thomas Hemsworth, Maura Herkert, Melissa Hertzberg, Sierra Heuvelman, Alison Hoffman, Jessica Hoffman, Daniel Hold Jack Horan, Ashil Jhaveri, Emery Jochnau, Brittany

Keller, Stephanie Keller, Nila Kirupaharan, Emily Krouk, Mary Kusik, Rachel Lee, Calvin Li, Rachel Lu, Alanna Margulies, Ethan Marmolejos, Andres Marquez, Emma Marzalek, Sarah McCracken, Marlise Moesch, Sydney Moholkar, Katherine Morris, Angela Munoz, Camryn Murphy, Ryan Murray, Eliana Neuwirth, Gillan O'Meara, Lauren Olin, Caitlyn Park, Micah Parker, Jessica Pearlstein, Joshua Pester, Carl Peterson, Matthew Piccirilli, Brady Pilsbury, Jared Pincus, Andrew Pluta, Lexi Pollner, Alyssa Printz, Brigita Przybylski, Deepta Raghavan, Michael Raman, Gabriella Roca, Andrew Roth, Shahab Sahranavard, Neha Saju, Nicole Salk, Gillian Santos, Diana Sarrico Jarett Schwartz, Lindsey Shi, Connie Situ, Andrew Song, Emma Sonta, Anusha Srinivas, Jeffrey Stickler, Sophia Su, Sanjay Subramanian, Annika Surapaneni, Chantal Taluba, Kevin Tan, Marlene Tartaro, Alexis Tekin, Michael Tobin, Caitlyn Tong, Eris Ulaj, Foram Vaidya, Craig Vergilio, Amreeta Verma, Julia Waldman, Jennifer Walpow, Ella Walsh, Kevin Wittmaack, Olivia Xu, Helen Yang, Michelle Yang, Neil Yang, Jason Ye, Linda Ye, Zachary Young,



Christopher Yu, Carrie Zhang, and Cherlin Zhu.

This year's inductees' selection as student Executive Board members are: President, Julia Waldman; vice president, Emery Jochnau; secretary, Vincent Dai; and treasurer, Demetra Chang.





## National Art Honor Society Induction

Parents, families, administration officials and teachers gathered in the Watchung Hills Regional High School South Auditorium on Wednesday, Nov. 1, to congratulate 92 students who were inducted into the National Art Honor Society (NAHS).

This year's inductees include 44 seniors, 33 juniors, and 15 sophomores. WHRHS Art Teachers Vincent Colabella and Emily Jordan are faculty sponsors for the NAHS.

Colabella welcomed everyone to the induction ceremony, said this was by far the largest number of students to be inducted at one time. WHRHS Principal George Alexis said this year's induction of more than 90 students to

NAHS sets a new standard for WHRHS.

The keynote speaker for the evening was 2007 WHRHS graduate Amanda Jane Givens, who is a fashion designer with Tracy Reese, West 39<sup>th</sup> Street, New York City, N.Y. Tracy Reese presents "a modern take on classic silhouettes rich with art inspired prints, beautiful color palettes, attention to detail, and novelty embellishment."

The National Art Honor Society includes students who demonstrate academic rigor in: Fine Arts, such as the ones taught at WHRHS in painting and drawing; Photography and Ceramics; as well as other 3-D disciplines, including Jewelry design, Sculpture, and Crafts, Jordan said.

Those honored this year at WHRHS are: Seniors: Sophie Almeida, Julia Amiano, Bailey Ashe, Kathryn Berger, Emily

Boney, Sean Boniakowski, David Brewster, Michael Bury, Renee Cabato, Edward Cai, Matthew Canary, Katelyn Carroll, Alexandra Catalano, Katelyn Familio, Lindsay Fogel, Alyssa Galdi, Abigail Gallic, Maura Herkert, Tanner Hogan, Danielle Kalen, Stephanie Keller, Ryan Kelly, Lucy Longobardi, Michael Maloney, Sarah McCracken, Kendal MacTaggart, Renee Mianowski, Daisy Portillo, Brigita Przybylski, Stephanie

Aanika Sadana, Shefali Sahay, Annika Schmidt, Rebecca Sendon, Heather Sherry, Juhee Sukla, Jaemi Spaven, Yvonne Tang, Brianna Titus, Megan Vetter, and Sophie Weaver.

Sophomores: Christina Baratta, John Farley, Alysabeth Gaito, Bianca Hartmann, Apurva Joshi, Elizabeth



Rodrigues, Angelia Seda, Emily Snead, Emma Sonta, Kaylee Spiteri, Marissa Stamler, Carissa Tsien, Amreeta Verma, Steven Wang, Shelagh Wickey, Hannah Wizeman, Michelle Yang, Jainie Yue, Daniel Zimmer, and Natalie Zurek.

Juniors: Anna Baitel, Shoili Banerjee, Sara Barrientos, Ruchi Biswas, Elizabeth Bruno, Jennifer Cagno, Kelsey Carlucci, Katherine Chang, Chloe Choi, Hailey Crawford, Molly Davis, Emily Imiolek, Portia Jones, Anna Kaplan, Sofia Kwon, Jacey Maree, Rachel Miller, Francesca Minervini, Arianna Rahimi, Elisabeth Morris, Catherine Ray, Alexa Renzo,

Killeen, Ngocthy Nguyen, Cristina Sarrico, Pramity Shah, Spencer Shao, Alice Spiers, Jack White, Jessica Young, Sarah Young and Vivian Zhang.

The NAHS student Executive Board are: President Matthew Canary; Vice Presidents Angelia Seda and Amreeta Verma; Secretaries Kathryn Berger and Elizabeth Morris; Public Relations Stephanie Rodrigues and Sara Barrientos; Gallery Coordinators Annika Schmidt, Portia Jones, and Elizabeth Killeen; and Director of Student Communications Natalie Zurek.

## Drama Department Fall Cabaret

Singers, musicians, actors and poets performed at the Fall Cabaret on Tuesday, Oct. 17, sponsored by the Drama Department at WHRHS.

The PAC's spacious stage was set up as a cabaret café, with all the stage curtains raised to the rafters, laying bare the brick walls, painted theatrically black. Behind the platform where the performers sang, entertained and read, the exposed stage rigging pulleys added authenticity to the setting. The lights were lowered, with generous hints of blue lighting injecting a mood. Some 16 acts performed, mostly solo singers with a few duets thrown in. Students tried their hand at songs from Broadway, and other iconic recording artists such as Frank Sinatra, The Beatles, Pearl Jam, and Christina Aguilera.

The evening provided drama students the opportunity to hone their craft in front of a live audience of mostly fellow students and some adults.

Hosts for the evening were students Sam Sinnott, Francesca Infante-Meehan, and Emma Leary. The trio also introduced acts, and opened, closed and provided between-acts light entertainment with short, witty skits.

A new student band, "Moonwake," performed two songs, with a special guest appearance of student Will Broder on drums. They played "Don't Let Me Down," by The Beatles, and "Yellow Ledbetter," by Pearl Jam. Moonwake has as its members, students Nicole Ball, Eddie Cai, Thomas Dardis, Ben Kosokowski and Lucas Mammone.

Solo singers included: Kyra Anthony singing "Safer," from "First Date;" Kayla Martins singing "I Intend to be Queen," from "You're a Good Man Charlie Brown;" and Giovanna DiSanto singing "Someone Else's Story," from "Chess."

Other solo performers included Justin Horowitz singing "Smile," from Charlie Chaplain's "Modern Times;" Christine Tanko singing "Until There Was You," from "The Music Man;" Dana Wasserman singing "Fly Me To The Moon," by Frank Sinatra; Madeline Leong delivering a dramatic reading of a monologue from "The Diary of Anne Frank;" and Anchil Dhir singing "Much More," from "The Fantastiks."

Jack Melillo sang "Beautiful City," from "Godspell." Summer Stuart sang "Hurt" by Christina Aguilera. Becca Baitel read an original poem, "Hope Rising."



Singing duets were: Malvika George and Melissa Miketen singing "Defying Gravity," from "Wicked;" and Maddy Goffredo and Emma Giordano singing "Dear Theodosia," from "Hamilton."

Drama Department Supervisor Dan Bertelli played guitar and sang two classics from the Folk Rock era. He introduced the songs, saying they were among his favorites to both play on the guitar and to sing: "You're Gonna Make Me Lonesome When You Go," by Bob Dylan; and "You and Me," by Neil Young.

Greeting patrons at the door and acting as stage managers were Mark Caamano and Emily Snead. Sound and lighting were provided by Nick DiNizio and Chris Valenti. Script and Cue Advisor is WHRHS Drama Teacher Doug Eaton. Script and Cue Business Manager is Dianne Krutz.



## Homecoming Court King and Queen

Seniors Matthew Canary and Caitlyn Park were named the 2017 King and Queen of the Homecoming Court at the Watchung Hills Regional High School Homecoming Game, Friday, Oct. 6, at the Warriors' Tozier Football Stadium.

In addition to Homecoming King Canary and Queen Park, also named to the Homecoming Court are: Vamsi Desu, Andrew Malfetti, Sahil Patel, and Ryan Santos as well as Katelyn Carroll, Nina Goliyad, Emma Sonta, and Jen Walpow.

All members of the Homecoming Court were escorted to the center of the football field by family members during special Homecoming Night halftime festivities. The King and Queen were announced by Student Government Advisor Maureen Kelly, accompanied by ASC (All School Council) Member Emma Gaffney. The King and the Queen were crowned on the spot.

Kelly explained the process by which the King and Queen were selected.

"Upon returning to Watchung Hills this September,' Kelly said, "the current Senior class nominated their peers to comprise our 2017 Homecoming Court. The students were told to nominate a male and female student who embodies our Watchung Hills values and traditions.

"The top five nominees for King and Queen were tallied. Thereafter, the entire student body was able to vote on the King and Queen. We accepted and tallied votes up until the end of the first quarter of the game. Prior to the game the court and their families were welcomed with a Homecoming Reception sponsored by our WHRHS All School Council."



## White Out Against Bullying

The Homecoming Night was also "White-Out against Bullying" Night, sponsored by the student's Diversity Club. Many students, parents and staff wore white in support of an ongoing initiative at the school to raise awareness and support for the anti-bullying movement at WHRHS and in the community.

State Sen. Tom Kean Jr., R-Morris, Somerset and Union, who is also the N.J. Senate Minority Leader, as well as Somerset County Sheriff Capt. Tim Pino, were special guests of White-Out against Bullying Night. They also have been present at several White Out assemblies at the school over the years.

They were accompanied out onto the field for a short ceremony before the game, accompanied by: Superintendent Elizabeth Jewett; Principal George Alexis; WHRHS Social Studies Teachers and Diversity Club advisors Mary Sok and Jamie Lott-Jones; and a dozen members of the Diversity Club.

Many students, parents, staff and guests at the game also wore white in support of the White-Out against Bullying Initiative.

In the game, the Warriors battled Phillipsburg High School





## White Out Against Bullying (Cont'd)

Stateliners, but in the end WHRHS lost to perennial state football powerhouse, 35-0.

Warrior senior quarterback Connor James finished with 9 of 21 for 149 yards passing and ran the ball another 10 times for 47 yards. Among the highlights, senior receiver Mike Asante had three catches for 61 yards. Senior running back had two receptions for 42 yards. Senior tight end Jeff Poggi had three catches for 37 yards.

During his remarks to the students and fans in the stands, Sen. Kean acknowledged that only six days earlier in Las Vegas, Nev., the week, “began with such sorrow,” and in contrast, “tonight we offer hope – hope to others that Watchung Hills stands against bullying and is ready to extend a hand to those being bullied.”

Kean continued, “In a week that began with such chaos, tonight we all stand together on this field – together, united, firm in our mission – as a team, as a school, and as a community against bullying.”

The WHRHS White Out initiative has been credited with having coined a new word, “Upstander,” a person who stands up against bullying. Kean made reference to that in his remarks.

“Let us look around tonight,” Kean said, “and remember this image and let it remind us that our commitment to each other and to the pledge we have taken to always stand up to hate, injustice and prejudice. Do your part to make this world a better, safer, and happier place for all of us.”

In closing, Kean said, “Now, Go Warriors!”



WHRHS Girls Soccer Team  
2017 Skyland Conference Champions



WHRHS Tennis Team  
2017 Somerset County Champions  
& State Sectional Champions



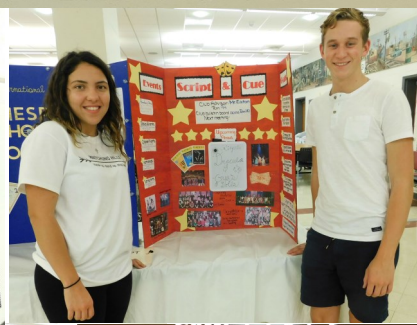
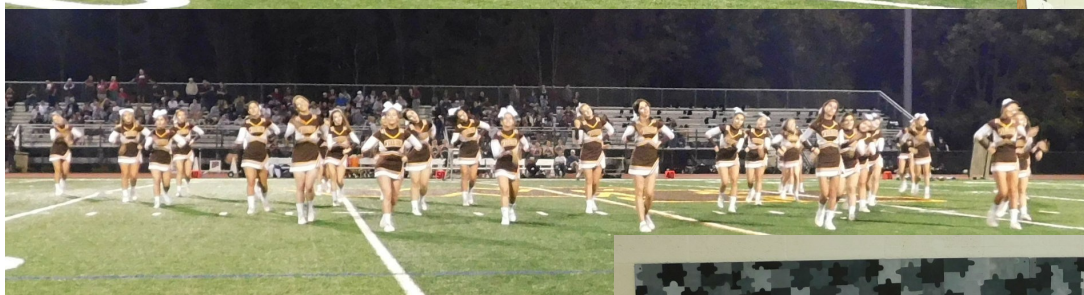
## The Hills Roundup

- ◆ Freshman Orientation was held on Wednesday, September 6, between 7:30 and 10:15 am. The students reported directly to the PAC, where they assembled as the Class of 2021 before following their schedule through an abbreviated 8 periods and meeting their teachers.
- ◆ Students from the WHRHS Choral Ensemble Club performed the National Anthem at TD Bank Ballpark (Patriot's Stadium) in Bridge-water on Friday, September 8, 2017.
- ◆ On September 9, students from the Tri-M National Music Honor Society Club performed at the 3rd Annual Millington Food Truck Festival in Millington, NJ. Performances featured instrumental and vocal performances. Additionally, on September 10, the Tri-M National Music Honor Society students performed at the Brandywine Nursing Home in Watchung, NJ.
- ◆ Senior Parent Night took place on Thursday, September 14. Twelfth-grade students and their parents met in groups with counselors to talk about the college-application process and post-high school plans.
- ◆ The Guidance department offered a financial aid information meeting on Wednesday, September 27, for parents of college-bound seniors. Dorothy Gilliard, a college financial aid officer with many years of experience was the guest speaker. She is a state-certified speaker through HESSA. There were approximately 225 parents in attendance. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the basis for the awarding of most financial aid. The CSS Profile is a financial aid form required by some private colleges. FAFSA and CSS Profile forms were discussed in this meeting. Mrs. Gilliard's presentation can be found on the guidance website.
- ◆ Back-to-School Night was held on Thursday, October 5 and the morning version on Monday, October 9. The faculty did an excellent job of sharing our instructional program with parents. We were very pleased by our peer leaders' volunteer efforts to serve as guides for parents.
- ◆ On Saturday, October 7th, the WHRHS Marching Warriors took first in Group 5 - A Competition at Somerville High School. Additionally, the Marching Warriors took first in Music and Overall Effect in Group 5 - A Competition with their 2017 show "America the Beautiful."
- ◆ Students Peter Wu and Kevin Tan were recognized by Governor Christie on their 10th place finish in the Management Decision Making event during the 2017 Future Business Leaders of America-Phi Beta Lambda National Leadership Conference.
- ◆ Twenty-seven of our Theatre Arts students have earned induction into the International Thespian Society, the honor society for secondary school theatre students. The thespians honored were active members of the Theatre Arts program/Troupe 236 at WHRHS for the 2016-2017 school year.
- ◆ WHRHS hosted Winter Athletics Night on October 19. A brief presentation was given regarding our athletics program, followed by break-out sessions with coaches of the teams.
- ◆ Junior parent/student night was held on Wednesday, October 18. There was a large turnout for the event. Students and parents attended break-out sessions with their individual counselors focusing on college admissions, the application process, research, financial aid, and alternatives to college.
- ◆ On November 3, The International Thespian Society performed one-act plays in an effort to raise money for Hurricane Relief. The performances were written, directed, and, choreographed entirely by the students.
- ◆ The 4th Annual Robotics Open House was also held November 3. The Robotics team showcased last year's robot, gave tours of the shop, and answered many questions regarding the Robotics team.
- ◆ On November 7, we hosted Freshman Parent Night. Topics focused on students' four years at WHRHS, including transcripts, Naviance, college searches, resume development, and future scheduling.
- ◆ The ASC student council organized the annual Pep Rally last period on September 15 on the Turf Field, and Homecoming Spirit Week, October 2 through October 6, followed by the Homecoming Game on the evening of October 6. The Diversity Club, led by senior students Alanna Margulies and Helen Yang, sponsored a White-Out Against Bullying on Friday and organized a pregame ceremony with special guest speaker Senator Tom Kean at Homecoming on Friday night. Faculty advisors, Jamie Lott-Jones and Mary Sok, supported the students' efforts.

***"What lies behind us and what lies before us are  
tiny matters compared to what lies within us."***

***Ralph Waldo Emerson***









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